

FRANKLIN SANDS

Our State Representative, House District 98

2009 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM REPRESENTATIVE FRANKLIN SANDS

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

I am humbled to serve as the Democratic leader in the state House of Representatives and as your voice in Tallahassee for Florida House District 98.

The 2009 legislative session has ended, and it was one of the toughest on record. My priorities throughout the session were Florida's economic recovery, creating new jobs, improving public education and fighting for working-class families.

In writing a new state budget, we faced a \$6 billion revenue shortfall. The Legislature responded by reducing programs and services, draining trust funds and increasing fees.

I am pleased, though, by progress the Legislature has made toward improving health outcomes for children and others with the use of new federal economic recovery funds.

More political courage is required to sustain the progress we are making and to meet the state's financial challenges so that education, social services and health needs of Florida are adequately funded.

I assure you that I will continue to battle for the reforms that our state needs. And I sincerely appreciate the opportunity you have given me to represent you in Tallahassee.

I appreciate your comments about this newsletter and my performance as your representative. I will continue striving to serve you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Fr. Sands".

Franklin Sands

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BALANCING FLORIDA'S BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009-2010

A debate over how to resolve a \$6-billion budget deficit due to the economic slowdown dominated a very chal-



lenging 2009 legislative session. What resulted is a \$66.5 billion budget that provides spending for important initiatives but fails to adequately meet the needs of Florida and this district.

With unemployment at high levels, housing prices depressed and tourism and other key Florida industries suffering, a historic opportunity to reshape our state's economic policies and tax structure was missed.

Simply put, I believe the budget could have been better. The budget that passed the Legislature will raise taxes, fees and university tuition, drain trust funds, and cut programs crucial to meeting the needs of our people, especially seniors and those who rely on our state's health care services.

I had hoped for a much better outcome for Florida, and that's why I voted "no" to this budget's final passage.

"I voted 'no' on the 2009-2010 fiscal year budget for many reasons. The most important reason was because it was bad for the people: The elderly, the children and for working families," said Democratic Leader Franklin Sands.

HEALTH CARE IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

With the help of federal economic recovery funds, I am pleased that the Legislature met obligations to finance many crucial state and local health care programs. But I am deeply disappointed by potentially harmful cuts to programs that provide health services to Florida seniors.

Programs that may suffer include ones operated by the state Department of Elder Affairs. For instance, sharp cuts are made in the budget to the Community Care for the Elderly program, which helps many seniors remain in

their homes instead of nursing facilities. Similarly, severe cuts will be made to state programs that provide in-home care and daily meals for the elderly, as well as special assistance to individuals and caregivers living with Alzheimer's disease.

I am distressed by the decision to reduce Medicaid reimbursement rates to nursing homes and a cut to some health initiatives for minorities. But I am pleased by our successful efforts to fund the state's Meds-AD program, which helps seniors purchase medica-



tions.

Also, I'm grateful that budget cuts spared Florida's very important Medically Needy program, which provides essential health care for low-income families.



The proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 state budget increases per-student spending only modestly, reaching a statewide average of \$6,873. We can do better, especially

EDUCATION AND OUR CHILDREN

considering Florida school funding has fallen since the Fiscal Year 2007-08 level of \$7,128 per student.

How we spend these limited education dollars is important. The proposed budget earmarks \$130 million to reward schools whose students score well on the FCAT exams. While it is important to reward good performance, I think we should also do more to help students at under-performing schools

needing assistance.

Overall, I'm disappointed that the state is not meeting my expectations for adequately funding our schools. For instance, by delaying by another year the implementation of the voter-approved Class Size Amendment at the classroom level, the Legislature is making it more difficult to reach class-size goals in the years to come.

REP. SANDS LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

TAMIAMI TRAIL AND SFWMD UPDATE

Historically, the Everglades flowed southward from Lake Okeechobee through the central Everglades through Shark River Slough, in what is now Everglades National Park, and finally to open water in the 10,000 Islands.

Over the years, the construction of Tamiami Trail Water Conservation Areas and urban/agricultural areas have effectively blocked the natural flow way, making Everglades north too wet and those to the south too dry. The Modified Water Deliveries Project was authorized by Congress via Public Law 101-229, the Ever-

glades National Park Protection and Expansion Act of 1989, to help fix this blockage.

The Project should have been completed by 1997, but after more than a decade of wrangling over how to best modify Tamiami Trail, the flow remains blocked.

The Army Corp of Engineers proposed building a one mile bridge to unblock the flows at a reasonable cost. The bridge would increase water flow by 90 percent, helping native plants and wildlife. This simple solution will be major step in returning natural flows to the Everglades and can be done quickly.



Rep. Sands discusses with SFWMD officials the plan and the approved \$183 million for Everglades' projects. This summer the Tamiami Trail project will start construction and receive \$60 million.

595 EXPANSION UPDATE

I-595 opened in 1989 connecting the western parts of South Florida to the existing north-south freeways. In 2003, the I-95/I-595 Master Plan predicted doubling of

traffic, congestion and delays along I-595 by 2020. The I-595 Corridor project consists of the reconstruction of the I-595 mainline and all associated improvements to adjacent cross roads. The limits of the project extend from I-75/Sawgrass Expressway interchange to the I-595/I-95 interchange in central Broward County.

A few highlights of the project include tolled, reversible, ground level express lanes to be known as 595 express, improvements to the I-595/Florida's Turnpike interchange and continuous connection of State Road

84 between Davie Road and State Road 7.

Major construction is anticipated to begin during the summer of 2009 with the overall construction schedule anticipated to last for 5 years with construction completing in 2014.

For more information on the project and timeline of construction please visit www.i-595.com



ALLIGATOR ALLEY REMAINS PUBLIC

Alligator Alley is a 78-mile section of Interstate I-75 in South Florida connecting the southwestern and southeastern coastal areas of Florida. It was originally constructed during the late 1960s. From 1986 to 1992, it was widened to four-lanes and made a limited access, tolled, interstate facility.

During the 2009 Session, I sponsored legislation to stop the state from leas-

ing Alligator Alley to a private entity. Even though the legislation did not pass, the FL Dept. of Transportation did not receive any proposals for the year 2010 for the right to lease, maintain, operate and receive toll revenues. The state's primary objective in pursuing the lease was to maximize value to the state for reinvestment in transportation facilities. I will continue to advocate that the roadway remain in state control.



Rep. Sands in the House Chamber confers with colleagues during the 2009 Session.



Representative Franklin Sands, Proudly Serving House District 98



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POSTAGE

CONSTITUENT ADDRESS



HELPFUL CONTACT AND REFERRAL INFORMATION

Office of Rep. Sands	954-424-6800	Broward Emergency	
Broward Red Cross	954-797-3800	Management	954-831-3900
Red Cross Family		Florida Power & Light	
Links Registry	1-877-568-3317	Service	954-797-5000
Salvation Army	1-800-996-2769	Outages	1-800-4OUTAGE
Broward Meals on Wheels	954-731-8770	People's Gas	954-763-8900
Broward Sheriff		AT&T	
(Non-Emergency)	954-765-4321	Service	954-780-7611
Broward Waste &		Outages	1-888-757-6500
Recycling	954-765-4999	Broward County	
Medicaid Fraud	1-866-966-7226	Hurricane Hotline	954-831-4000
	954-712-4600	Broward Humane Society	
FEMA	1-800-621-3362	Hurricane Hotline	954-266-6871